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NEWS RELEASE

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Watershed Association Celebrates 9th Annual Butterfly Festival *Offers New Pre-Festival Pollinator Talk & Passport Prizes*

July 17, 2009 (Hopewell, NJ) – Come celebrate the importance of protecting clean water, the environment, and one of our most colorful native pollinators – the butterfly – at the **Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's 9th Annual Butterfly Festival** on **Saturday August 15**.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., join the Watershed Association – central New Jersey's first environmental group – for a day of family fun at the scenic 860-acre Watershed Reserve on Titus Mill Road in Hopewell. Attendees can enjoy naturalist-guided tours of the Kate Gorrie Memorial Butterfly House, along with nature hikes, live entertainment, local food, children's activities, a waterslide, hayrides, and an array of demonstrations and exhibits about the environment and conservation.

"This year's Butterfly Festival is an important part of our yearlong 60th Anniversary celebration of our natural environment," said Jim Waltman, Watershed Association Executive Director. "There's no better time to celebrate the importance of protecting our native butterflies and other pollinators."

NEW for 2009:

What can you do to help our butterfly friends and protect clean water and the environment? To find out, complete the **Butterfly Festival Passport** (found in the event program) by visiting the festival's special Conservation, Advocacy, Science and Education Zones and win a special prize. Work as a team or individual to answer four simple kid-friendly questions, stamp your passport in each zone, and return it to our Membership tent to receive a fun prize!

Show off your Butterfly Festival spirit in the **Butterfly Hat & Costume Parade**. Open to both children and adults, participants are encouraged to get creative and design their very own hat or costume with a butterfly theme. Learn how to enter at www.thewatershed.org/events/butterfly2009.html.

Learn more about our native pollinators and the challenges they face at a special pre-festival event: **Bees to Butterflies – Native Pollinators of NJ**. On Thursday August 13, join an expert panel of science and conservation leaders at 7 p.m. in the Kingsford Community Room at the Watershed Reserve as they explore the critical role native pollinators play and what issues they face for survival in New Jersey. Panelists include nationally recognized bee researcher Dr. Rachael Winfree of Rutgers University, Tim Dunne of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service, and Jess Nierderer of Honey Brook Organic Farm, the nation's largest community-supported organic farm. Seating is limited and registration required.

A \$5 donation is suggested. Call (609) 737-3735 x10 to register today.

Festival Details:

For 2009, the Butterfly Festival features a wide array of merchants, organizations and vendors dedicated to environmental protection and conservation, including groups like the Master Gardeners of Mercer County, Lawrence Hopewell Trail, Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space and Monarch Journey. Food vendors include Nomad Pizza, Viva Gelato, Blossoms Soul Food and Millstone River Creamery. From solar power to Smart Cars, attendees can enjoy all-day demonstrations that inform and educate. Plus, the festival's new Conservation, Advocacy, Science and Education Zones offer fun activities for the entire family.

Raffle tickets will be on sale for the Watershed Association's 2009 Watershed FEST Raffle item – a hand-crafted Cricket Forge butterfly bench. Raffle tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased at the Festival or by calling (609) 737-3735 x10. All proceeds benefit the Watershed Association and help us continue to protect clean water and the environment. A winner will be drawn at the 2009 Watershed FEST, a black tie and wellies fundraiser at the Watershed Reserve, on Saturday October 3.

Butterfly Festival admission is \$5 per person (\$15 per carload) with parking generously provided across the street from the Watershed Association at Bristol-Myers Squibb. No pets allowed. For more information or directions, visit www.thewatershed.org or call (609) 737-3735.

Special thanks to event sponsors Tyco International and Bristol-Myers Squibb.

About the Watershed Association

Now celebrating its 60th Anniversary, the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is central New Jersey's first environmental group, protecting clean water and the environment through conservation, advocacy, science, and education. Founded in 1949, the Watershed Association protects a 265-square-mile area of central New Jersey drained by the Stony Brook and Millstone River spanning 26 towns and five counties. Learn more at www.thewatershed.org.

Interviews with Executive Director Jim Waltman available upon request. Contact Gwen McNamara, Communications Manager, at (609) 737-3735 x16 or gmcnamara@thewatershed.org.

Photo captions:

Butterfly1.jpg

Photo by: Frank Wojciechowski

Benjamin Hiscock and mom Christine Sproat enjoy the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's 2008 Butterfly Festival. This year's Festival will be Saturday August 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Watershed Reserve, 31 Titus Mill Road, Pennington.

FESTRaffle_ButterflyBench_2.jpg

Photo courtesy of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association

Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association Communications Manager Gwen McNamara and Pipsie the beagle enjoy the Watershed Association's 2009 Watershed FEST Raffle item – a handcrafted Cricket Forge Butterfly Bench. Raffle tickets are \$10 and are available for purchase at the 2009 Butterfly Festival on Saturday August 15 or by calling (609) 737-3735 x10.